

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 34611 280524Z
ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 EA-09 ISO-00 SCA-01 DHA-02 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 PRS-01 DEAE-00 SNM-02 /026 W
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R 280450Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7596
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY RANGOON
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

UNCLAS BANGKOK 34611

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CASC, TH
SUBJ: SUGGESTED POSTING OF WARNINGS TO AMCITS OF DANGERS OF
ARREST FOR NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING

1. OF 27 AMERICAN CITIZENS INCARCERATED IN THE BANGKOK CONSULAR DISTRICT, 21 HAVE BEEN CONVICTED OF NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING. AT THIS TIME THREE ARE IN JAIL PENDING INVESTIGATION AND FOUR ARE ON BAIL PENDING TRIAL FOR DRUG TRAFFICKING (THREE OTHERS ARE IN PRISON FOR THEFT OR IMMIGRATION OVERSTAY). OUR MONTHLY RATE FOR THE YEAR UNTIL DECEMBER HAS AVERAGED FOUR AMERICANS A MONTH ARRESTED. BASED ON WHAT WAS INDICATED AT THE EA CONSULAR CONFERENCE, WE APPEAR TO HAVE THE LARGEST NUMBER OF CITIZENS IN CUSTODY IN THE EA AREA.

2. THE INCREASING VOLUME OF ARRESTS AND OTHER INDICATIONS POINT TO THE FACT THAT THAI NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION EFFORTS ARE BEING MORE EFFECTIVE. IT OCCURS TO US THAT THE DEPARTMENT (SCA) IN ITS CONTINUING EFFORTS TO INFORM THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE
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PAGE 02 BANGKO 34611 280524Z

DANGERS OF SUCH TRAFFICKING SUCH AS WITH DOS PUBLICATION 8862, MAY WISH TO CONSIDER SOME ADDITIONAL MEANS OF INFORMING TRAVELLERS ABOUT THE RISKS INHERENT IN SUCH ACTIVITIES IN THAILAND AND ELSEWHERE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. PERHAPS POSTERS AT WEST COAST PORTS OF DEPARTURE OR EVEN INSERTS IN ISSUED PASS-PORTS MIGHT BE WORTH CONSIDERING IN ORDER TO GET THE WORD OUT.

3. WHILE THE PERSONAL PHYSICAL HARDSHIPS OF INCARCERATION ARE NOT AS SEVERE AS THOSE IN MEXICO HAVE BEEN FOR EXAMPLE, LIFE IS NOT PLEASANT IN THAI JAILS AND OFFENDERS CAN EXPECT SEVERE TERMS RANGING FROM THREE TO A POSSIBLE 30 YEARS WITH ONLY INFREQUENTLY DECLARED ROYAL AMNESTIES TO REDUCE SENTENCES. SOME LIFE SENTENCES HAVE BEEN HANDED DOWN RECENTLY TO FOREIGNERS, AND THERE IS TALK IN THE PRESS OF A DEATH PENALTY FOR TRAFFICKING. PAROLE AS SUCH FOR GOOD BEHAVIOR IS NOT PRACTICED IN THE THAI PENAL SYSTEM.

4. EMBASSY BELIEVES FAIR WARNING SHOULD BE ISSUED TO THE TRAVELLING PUBLIC THAT THE THAI, WHILE HOSPITABLE TO AMERICAN TOURISTS, ARE TAKING A HARD LINE WITH THIS INCREASING LOCAL SOCIAL PROBLEM OF DRUGS AND TRAFFICKING.
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